

THE MOVEMENT

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EDITORIAL OFFICE:

449 14th Street
San Francisco, California 94103
626-4577

PEOPLE AND POWER JACK MINNIS**INVESTIGATE YOUR LOCAL CIA**

The evidence mounts daily that the U.S. is far along the road to fascism. If there was a point of no return in the post-World-War-II era, it probably was passed on November 22, 1963. Three recent books, Lane's *Rush to Judgment*, Epstein's *Inquest* and Sauvage's *The Oswald Affair*, pretty well nail down the fact that the members of the Warren Commission were, at best, afraid of what they would find if they looked too closely into the assassination of John



Photo: Frank Cieciorka

F. Kennedy. This conclusion is, on the evidence of these books, a very conservative one. It is more reasonable to suppose, from this evidence, that two or more members of the Commission consciously conspired to exclude some facts, distort, misinterpret and misrepresent others, and, in general, to ensure that the staff of the Commission would function ineffectively.

It is useless to conjecture about who

was responsible for the killing and why it was done. It is not useless to observe the changes which took place in a number of policy areas when the new Johnson administration took over. There is no space here for a detailed examination of these policy changes, but, for example, the change in U.S. policy toward Latin America was immediate and could hardly have been more complete had the assassination been publicly acknowledged a coup d'etat by its perpetrators.

Several commentators have remarked that the assassination must have been the act of one demented killer because it was not followed by a right-wing takeover. This explanation overlooks the fact that, in some policy areas, Johnson's accession to the presidency constituted a right-wing takeover. This reality is difficult if not impossible for most Americans to accept, so they either dismiss the matter from their minds, or they scoff at the idea as the product of political demonology. One begins to understand how the German people could have permitted the excesses of the Nazi period.

It is true that the facts of the assassination are in dispute and, given the great weight of respectability of those who support the Warren Commission and its report, it is probably inevitable that most people in the society will continue to take the comfortable view that all is still well.

However, for those who feel uneasy about trends in the U.S., and want more evidence, an interesting line of investigation is suggested by recent events.

Last month Robert Kennedy's brother-in-law was killed in the crash of a private plane in Idaho. Killed with him was Louis Werner, II, a St. Louis investment banker. The AP dispatch on the crash identified him as an employee of the CIA. The New

York Times story said he had been for 15 years the chief of the St. Louis CIA office, and that his principal job was the recruitment of personnel for the spy agency.

I had recently been reading Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*, which details the intimate cooperation of Hitler's political police and the German industrialists in various forms of domestic and international criminality.

Shortly after the crash story appeared I read Schlesinger's *Thousand Days*. His account of the CIA role in the Bay of Pigs invasion is consistent with the hypothesis that CIA may have been acting in the interest of U.S. banks and corporations trying to reclaim what Castro took away from them, figuring if they sucked Kennedy into beginning that ill-fated operation, he'd feel compelled to finish it off with U.S. troops, and Castro would be gone.

Fantastic? Unbelievable? Crackpot? Maybe.

On the other hand the skeptic might enquire: in how many other offices of the CIA do bankers and businessmen screen possible recruits? Why would one of the most powerful bankers in the middle west (whose bank has ties with, incidentally, some of the larger international corporations) be so interested in who gets recruited to do the dirty work of the CIA?

The questions may be crackpot, but the answers would be facts which, one suspects, would lead to some rather startling conclusions about how far down that road we've already gotten. ☹

(Editor's Note: Jack sent in this column along with a note which said in part, "Since you originally suggested using this column as a stimulus for research, I thought this might get someone interested in doing a real story on the CIA. I'm told they have regional offices in both San Francisco and LA. Who runs these offices? Is there an advisory council of fat cats?")